AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-25 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for producing sealed capsules (C), each capsule defined by a body (1) coupled with a lid (2), the method ~~at least~~ comprising the following steps of:

filling the capsule body (1) with a quantity or dose (3) of material; ~~and~~

closing the capsule (C) by placing the lid (2) over the body (1) so that ~~their~~ the respective annular ends (1a, 2a) of the body and lid overlap; ~~the method being characterised in that it further comprises a step of~~ and

applying a sealing substance to at least one of the overlapped ends (1a, 2a) of the capsule body (1) and lid (2), wherein said sealing step ~~being~~ is performed before the capsule (C) is closed.

2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the step of applying the sealing substance is performed at substantially the same time as when the end of the lid (2) overlaps the end of the corresponding ~~respective~~ body (1).

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the step of applying the sealing substance is performed immediately after the end of the lid (2) partially overlaps the end of the corresponding ~~respective~~ body (1).

4. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~any of the foregoing claims from~~ claim 1 ~~to 3~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the step of applying the sealing substance is performed ~~while~~ during a step of rotating at least the capsule body (1) about ~~its~~ a longitudinal axis (Z) ~~in such a way as to apply~~ wherein the sealing substance is applied to the annular end (1a) of the body (1) ~~itself~~.

5. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~any of the foregoing claims from~~ claim 1 ~~to 3~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the step of applying the sealing substance is performed while rotating both the body (1) and lid (2) about ~~the~~ a longitudinal axis (Z) ~~in such a way as to apply~~ wherein the sealing substance is applied to both ~~the~~ annular ends (1a, 2a) of the body (1) and lid (2) ~~themselves~~.

6. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~any of the foregoing claims from~~ claim 1 ~~to 5~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the step of applying the sealing substance is accomplished by spraying.

7. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~any of the foregoing claims from~~ claim 1 ~~to 6~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the sealing substance ~~comprises~~ includes an aqueous mixture comprising ~~at least~~ water and ethanol.

8. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~any of the foregoing claims from~~ claim 1 ~~to 6~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the sealing substance comprises a cellulose based liquid substance.

9. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~any of the foregoing~~ ~~claims from~~ claim 1 ~~to 6~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the sealing substance comprises a gelatin based liquid substance.

10. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~any of the foregoing~~ ~~claims from~~ claim 1 ~~to 9~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the step of closing the capsule (C) is followed by a step of drying the ~~sealed~~ capsule (C) while the ~~latter~~ capsule (C) is held in a stable position.

11. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 10, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the drying step is performed ~~during the step of transferring~~ while the ~~capsules~~ capsule (C) is transferred towards capsule collection containers.

12. (Currently Amended) A capsule filling machine (4) for the production of sealed capsules (C) ~~of the type with~~ having a lid (2) and a body (1) containing pharmaceutical material therein, the machine (4) ~~being of the type~~ comprising:

a station (5) for feeding the capsule bodies (1) and lids (2);

a dosing station (6) for filling a dose of the material into each capsule body (1); ~~and~~

a station (7) for closing the capsules (C) by placing each lid (2) over ~~the respective~~ a corresponding body (1) ~~so that their~~ wherein respective annular ends (2a, 1a) of the lid and the body overlap; and

at least one intermediate operating station (8) disposed ~~the machine (4) being~~ ~~characterised in that~~ between the dosing station (6) and the closing station (7), wherein

the ~~there is~~ at least one intermediate operating station (8) is used for applying a sealing substance in ~~the~~ a vicinity of the ends (1a, 2a) of the body and the lid.

13. (Currently Amended) The machine according to claim 12, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the intermediate operating station (8) comprises, ~~one after the other,~~ in a sequential order of a substation (9) for precoupling the ~~capsule bodies~~ body (1) and ~~lids~~ lid (2) to each other, and a substation (10) for applying the sealing substance.

14. (Currently Amended) The machine according to claim 12 ~~or 13~~, ~~characterised in that it comprises~~ further comprising:

a first turret (11) for moving the capsules (C) along a circular path (P) extending at least through the feed and dosing stations (5, 6), wherein the intermediate station (8) ~~comprising~~ comprises a second, independent turret (12) that rotates about an axis (Z') in order to position the ~~capsules~~ capsule (C) at the precoupling substation (9), at the substation (10) for applying the sealing substance and at the closing station (7);

wherein the second turret (12) ~~being~~ is equipped with a plurality of retaining means (13) for retaining the capsules (C), mounted radially on the second turret (12) and acting in conjunction with handling means (14) for handling the body (1) and lid (2).

15. (Currently Amended) The machine according to claim 14, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the handling means (14) are located in the vicinity of the retaining means (13), move vertically in both directions, and are equipped with first

means (15) for creating a vacuum which enable the following steps to be carried out, respectively, along a rotational path (P1) of the second turret (12):

picking up and transferring the ~~bodies~~ body (1) and ~~lids~~ the lid (2) to the second turret (12) positioned in such a way that ~~they~~ the lid and the body partially overlap each other, ~~that is to say, with~~ wherein their respective ~~their~~ ends (1a, 2a) ~~in~~ contact each other while at the retaining means (13);

rotating the ~~capsule bodies~~ body (1) and ~~lids~~ the lid (2) at the substation (10) for applying the sealing substance in such a way as to spread the sealing substance evenly thereon; and

closing the capsules (C) by moving the ~~bodies~~ body (1) and the ~~respective lids~~ lid (2) closer together.

16. (Currently Amended) The machine according to claim 14 ~~or 15~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the retaining means (13) comprises: ~~comprise, for each capsule (C),~~

a concave end seat (13a), located on the second turret (12), for accommodating the ~~capsule~~ body (1) and the lid (2);

wherein the seat (13a) ~~having~~ has a central cavity (13b) for separating two portions of the seat (13a) and ~~having~~ leading into the two portions ~~them~~ respective radial conduits (16, 17) connected to second means (18) for creating a vacuum which enable them to retain the portion of the ~~respective~~ body (1) and the lid (2) when the body (1) and the lid (2) ~~themselves~~ move to the substations (9, 10) and to the closing station (7).

17. (Currently Amended) The machine according to ~~one of the claims from~~ claim 14 ~~to 16~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the handling means (14) comprises ~~comprise~~, at the precoupling substation (9), a pair of hollow cylindrical pins (19, 20) located on opposite sides of the second turret (12) and equipped with the first vacuum means (15); the cylindrical pins (19, 20) being equipped with handling means (21) for enabling stable contact, on both sides, with the body (1) and the lid (2) positioned on the first turret (11) so as to transfer ~~them~~ the body and the lid to the second turret (12) in a vertical direction while partially overlapping the body (1) and lid (2).

18. (Currently Amended) The machine according to ~~one of the claims from~~ claim 14 ~~to 17~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the handling means (14) comprises ~~comprise~~, at the sealing substation (10), at least one cylindrical pin (22) for coming into contact with ~~the~~ a bottom of ~~a~~ the body (1) through the first vacuum means (15) and rotating ~~the~~ a partly overlapped bottom (1) and the lid (2) about the longitudinal axis (Z).

19. (Currently Amended) The machine according to ~~one of the claims from~~ claim 14 ~~to 18~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the sealing substation (10) comprises at least one spray nozzle (23) facing at least one of the ~~a respective capsule~~ body (1) ~~and/or~~ and the lid (2) as the second turret (12) rotates the body and the lid ~~them~~; the nozzle (23) being positioned at the overlapping annular ends (1a, 2a) of the body (1) and the lid (2) in such a way as to uniformly spray the sealing substance on the overlapping ends (1a, 2a) ~~themselves~~.

20. (Currently Amended) The machine according to claim 19, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the nozzle (23) is ~~designed~~ configured to spray an aqueous mixture comprising ~~at least~~ water and ethanol.

21. (Currently Amended) The machine according to claim 19, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the nozzle (23) is ~~designed~~ configured to spray a cellulose based liquid substance.

22. (Currently Amended) The machine according to claim 19, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the nozzle (23) is ~~designed~~ configured to spray a gelatin based liquid substance.

23. (Currently Amended) The machine according to ~~one of the claims from~~ claim 14 ~~to 22~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the handling means (14) comprises ~~comprise~~, at the closing station (7), a pair of hollow cylindrical pins (24, 25) located on opposite sides of the second turret (12) and equipped with the first vacuum means (15) for holding the body (1) and the lid (2); the cylindrical pins (24, 25) being equipped with straight-line handling means (21) ~~not only to~~ that enable stable contact with the body (1) and lid (2) on both sides ~~but also to~~ and apply an opposite force on ~~them~~ the body and the lid so as to fully close the capsule (C); wherein at least the pin (24) ~~being~~ is equipped with rotational handling means (26) so as to impart a twisting movement to the capsule (C) while ~~it~~ the capsule (C) is being closed.

24. (Currently Amended) The machine according to ~~any of the foregoing claims from~~ claim 12 ~~to 23~~, ~~characterised in that it~~ further ~~comprises~~ comprising a station (27) for drying the ~~sealed capsules~~ capsule (C), the drying station (27) being located downstream of the closing station (7) on ~~the~~ a circular feed path (P1) followed by the ~~capsules~~ capsule (C).

25. (Currently Amended) The machine according to claim 24, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the drying station (27) comprises a capsule (C) conveyor belt (28) located in the vicinity of and under the second turret (12) that seals and closes the ~~capsules~~ capsule (C); the belt (28) having on ~~its~~ a surface thereof a plurality of seats (29), each seat designed to accommodate a single capsule (C) to be transferred by respective handling means (14) from the closing station (7) to one of the seats (29) in a vertical direction (V) in such a way as to keep the capsule (C) in a stable